

MEMORANDUM

~~SECRET~~

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

~~Outside the System~~
28 HAS BEEN

January 22, 1980

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR: ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI
FROM: TOM THORNTON
SUBJECT: Babies and Bathwater (U)

I am concerned with the long-term implications of two things that are being discussed now:

- The pledging of Alaskan North Shore oil to Japan;
- the scuttling of our human rights policy in Argentina. (S)

Leave aside for the moment whether you think I am exaggerating these two elements; you will agree that we are in both cases about to make major policy shifts. (S)

The disturbing point is that these are shifts in long-term policies in response to a very short-term situation. The Japanese case is particularly egregious, I find. A year or two from now it will make no difference whether Japan did or did not follow through on sanctions on Iran. From what I gather from the discussions I hear, nobody seems to think much of sanctions anyway. But we could be pledging a substantial part of our energy patrimony more or less in perpetuity. That just doesn't make sense. (S)

Similarly, in the Argentine case, it looks to me like we are about to make major concessions on a human rights policy that has been a mainstay of this administration. In return we are asking for something very tactical and of only passing importance. Here again, a few million tons of corn weigh pretty light in the balance against our basic commitment to human rights. (S)

I am concerned that there may be more such instances. Obviously we are facing a new situation globally and we have to make readjustments. But let's not trade off major policies for ad hoc arrangements without a clear realization of what we are doing. (S)

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Review 1/22/86

Department of State, A/GIS/IPS/SRP

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